



SKYLINE RPCC
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William L. Harp, MD
Executive Director, Virginia Board of Medicine
Perimeter Center
9960 Maryland Drive, Suite 300
Richmond, Virginia 23233-1463

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Dear Dr. Harp:

At a recent meeting of the Skyline Regional Perinatal Coordinating Council we were made aware of a Medicaid provider memo, dated October 10, 2007, concerning Medicaid enrollment and coverage for Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs). As you know, CPMs were recently licensed to provide home birth services in Virginia and are currently not required to have a collaborative relationship with any other healthcare providers, such as physicians.

We were concerned to find two CPT codes (59612 and 59614) on the list of those for which the DMAS will reimburse CPMs for home birth. These two codes refer to vaginal birth after previous cesarean birth, commonly called VBAC. Recent studies have pointed to increased risk with VBAC and most publications cite a 60-80% successful vaginal birth after a previous cesarean section; however, there is no reliable way to predict which patients will be successful. In July 2004, ACOG updated its VBAC guidelines and stated that a trial of labor is not recommended unless there is immediate access to anesthesia and surgical services (24/7). As a result of these recommendations, some community hospitals have stopped offering VBACs, realizing they are unable to meet the requirements for immediate intervention in the event of complications. Because of the associated risks, VBACs seem inconsistent with the home birth model.

The Skyline RPCC wishes to express its concern to the Board of Medicine, the regulating body for Certified Professional Midwives. It is our opinion that VBAC home deliveries unnecessarily increase the risk for a poor outcome for mother and infant. Medicaid approval for such appears to condone this practice and does not appear to be consistent with recommended ACOG practices for optimal outcomes. It is our request that Medicaid reimbursement for VBAC by CPMs be reconsidered and removed from the list of covered services.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Barbara Kirkland

Barbara Kirkland, RPCC Chair

Sharon Veith

Sharon Veith, RPCC Coordinator